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121 [1] Since the main object of this study is to throw light on contemporary happenings, more attention has been paid to the history of the past two or three hundred years than to the earlier Chinese contacts with Southeast Asia. Indeed, as in my work on the Chinese in Malaya, interest in the Chinese begins in earnest from the time when they formed more or less settled communities in the region, and minor account is taken of trading voyages or isolated travellers.

The story is brought up to the moment of writing, which differs, of course, in the several parts. The section on Indonesia, for example, stops just before the second Dutch 'police action'; for Malaya the narrative is taken to February 1949.

That the authorities are mostly European rather than Chinese is due to the fact that the analytic and descriptive habit is of only recent growth among the Chinese of Southeast Asia.